

### FEATURE ARTICLES:

'By GEORGE! The Salem-Calcutta Packet'

'In Praise of Trash'

'The Clock Collection at the Essex Institute'

'The Pickering Picks Through Ten Generations'

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### Special Features:

A loan exhibition of shards of late 18th Century glass, pottery, domestic and export porcelain, and other items, recovered by Racket Shreve from a newly-discovered well under his barn.

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## Acknowledgements &

The Show Committee wishes to thank the many people who help assure the success of this event, particularly

ROBERT S. BOOTH, ANNE FARNAM, D. ROGER HOWLETT and PHILIP CHADWICK FOSTER SMITH for the articles they have contributed.

ERNEST S. DODGE for his unfailing support and encouragement.

WARREN SHREVE for the special exhibit loan of material he has uncovered on Chestnut St.

All the generous sponsors and patrons.

The MUSEUM STAFF who have been so unstinting of their time and talents.

THE BRICK HEARTH for assistance in catering.

THE CRICKET PRESS for their printing of this catalogue.

The ADVERTISERS who have made this catalogue possible.

FRONT COVER: Pen and Ink drawing of Hamilton Hall, Salem, Massachusetts, by Warren Shreve.



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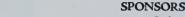
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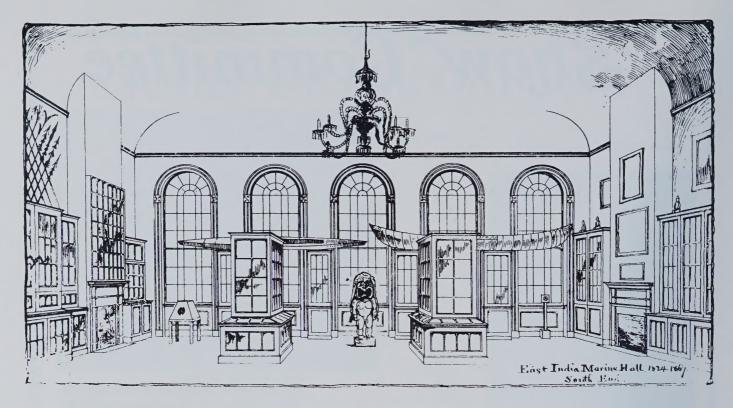
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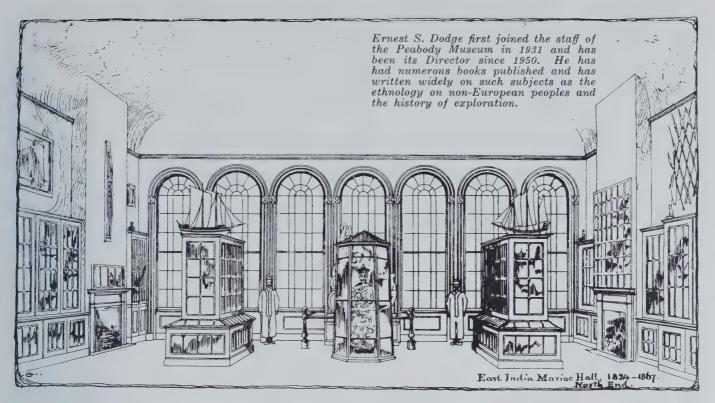
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The Hamilton Hall Antiques Show is a singularly appropriate event to benefit this museum. All of you who come, whether to browse or to find a specific piece of furniture, porcelain, glass, or whatever, have much in common with those who collected for the Museum. The members of the East India Marine Society were directed to collect "natural and artificial curiosities", and isn't this the way so many private collections beginwith objects not necessarily related to each other, but that have great appeal to the collector? But as the eye and the taste of the collector become more experienced and acute, the budding collections flower into entities of impeccable beauty and importance. At some point the collection defines itself around a theme or period: export porcelain, marine paintings, Chippendale furnishings, French paperweights, 19th century dolls, etc. That is certainly what has happened during the 177 years of the Museum's collecting — a vast assortment of "curiosities" has aligned itself around three central themes: maritime history, ethnology of non-European peoples, and the natural history of the County. The collections have become enormous and internationally famous ones.

Within these collections are also many pieces of outstanding artistic merit. They permit us to display permanent exhibitions based on central themes, and to mount exciting temporary exhibitions based on smaller, more particular themes. This year with the new wing has been a particularly full one for special exhibitions. I hope you will all come and enjoy them.

Two exhibits have been installed at the Museum under the advice of Carl L. Crossman. One relates to the lacquered furniture and other material brought back from Japan on the voyage of the *Margaret*, Captain Samuel Derby, in 1799, and the voyage of the *Franklin*, Captain James Devereux, 1801. These two Salem ships went to Nagasaki under Dutch charter from Batavia almost fifty years before Perry opened Japan to

Western commerce. The furniture, in Hepplewhite style, was all lacquered in Japan, and may have been built there. It is an exhibition that could not be put on anywhere except Salem.

The other, and larger, exhibition relates to the New England India trade. The China trade has always been the glamorous one, but for every ship that sailed to China, there were ten ships that sailed to India. We have in our collections an extraordinary amount of India export material — furniture, paintings of ports, portrait figures, and souvenirs of all kinds. This is the first time these have ever been brought together, and our material is augmented by loans from individuals, from the Essex Institute, from the Museum of Fine Arts, and the Springfield Museum of Art.

On November 17th, we are opening a special exhibition, sponsored by the Italian government in honor of our Bicentennial, on the influence of Andreas Palladio, the great Italian architect, upon American architecture. This will fill the entire first floor of the new wing, and will be one of the most important special exhibitions ever held in Salem.

Another recently installed special exhibition on American yachting, especially prints, paintings, and photographs, that should help keep the sailor happy during the cold winter months has been mounted in the Crowninshield Room.

All of these exhibitions and the many programs that go on at the Museum are made possible only by the support of many people. All of you who have participated in any way in this antiques show help support the Museum as an active cultural center in the metropolitan area. We very deeply appreciate the enthusiastic help of the exhibitors, volunteers, and all the other workers in the creation of this Fourth Annual Hamilton Hall Antiques Show, from which we benefit so much, and out of which we hope you get a great deal of pleasure and profit.

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THE SHIP GEORGE - THE SALEM-CALCUTTA PACKET.

Watercolor by Edmund Stone of Beverly, 1820

# By GEORGE!

THE SALEM-CALCUTTA PACKET

By Philip Chadwick Foster Smith

It once happened that a number of inbound East India ships came to an anchor in Salem Harbor all about the same time, each one filled timberheads awash with produce of the Malabar and Coromandel coasts or beyond and a crew of Salem boys overlong at sea. What better to do after nearly a year from home than to swarm ashore to satisfy their inner cravings at the well-known Essex Street establishment of the "tunny built old gentleman who kept a small shop, selling hot coffee, doughnuts, and pies"?

After fifty years, "Po Adam," reminiscing for the *Register*, visualized the old man as wearing a round-about jacket which gave him the extraordinary aspect of being nothing but back and legs. "Into his shop went those sailors right from the sea, having plenty of silver with them, eating pies, and taking a drink of coffee all round. A number of customers being in," he recalled, "they became a little impatient with the old fellow, who was slow in taking his change. One of the sailors, who stood the drinks, cried out to the gentleman, as he handed him the money, 'I say here, old chap? you with your back-sides kicked up under your jacket, take your money!"

Some of these lads were off an Indiaman owned by that "most excellent merchant" Joseph Peabody—"Po Adam" was one—and each had pockets baggy with hard cash. The India trade was one which stood them, their officers, employers, and the whole of Salem in very good stead. The temptation to speculate that the boys had just rowed themselves ashore from Mr. Peabody's ship *George* is too great to withstand, so let's suppose they did (as well they may have), because *George* became an institution around Salem for over twenty years. Between 1815 and 1837, she paid in excess of \$651,479.00 into the coffers of the Salem Custom House, considerably more into the personal credit ledgers of Joseph Peabody, and in no small manner contributed to the human resources of the town for decades to come.

George earned several nicknames during the course of such a productive career. One of them was "The Salem-Calcutta Packet," because twenty of her twenty-one Salem voyages were performed between the two ports with almost the regularity of a steamer on a timetable. There was never any doubt as to the season when her topgallant sails would be seen to lift over the Salem horizon, for George's arrival, like a migratory bird, signaled for sure the onset of another spring. Usually within another month and a half or so she would be working her way out of the ship channel again, to vanish behind the twin lights of Bakers Island and then reappear at last far to seaward with a towering press of canvas aloft and streaks of foam hissing under her forefoot.

When still a nameless hulk in 1814, however, it seemed to those who built her that she might be destined to sit rotting on the stocks unlaunched. She had been the creation of war and the victim of peace, never intended for a merchant vessel: built lean, rakish, strong enough to carry and work carriage guns, and, withal, a vessel designed not only for speed but total self-reliance in

whichever seas she chose to swim.

Fresh provisions consisted, as long as they lasted, of live pigs carried aboard and hens squawking from their coops on either side of the aft companionway, two of which on Sundays ended up as sea pies for the cabin table. The seamen got apple duff instead, palatable enough unless the cook forgot to soak the dried apples in salt water beforehand or left out the fat, in which case, "they might have been kicked from Cape Horn round the world by the way of [the] Cape of Good Hope and scarcely been dented."

As some came to think of *George* as "The Salem-Calcutta Packet," others dubbed her, with good reason, "The Salem School Ship," for hundreds of local boys got their training in her. None, one hopes, was ever so dark a green as the youth who is said once to have complained of his first day at sea: "The first thing I heard was the mate shout the order 'All hands on deck!' so that's where I put mine, but somebody trod on

them!"

"The sailors in Mr. Peabody's ships," remarked "Po Adam" in contrast, "were sharp, quick, active, well educated in public schools, were mostly from Salem, Beverly, Marblehead, &c., and belonged at home when on shore." The captains "were self-educated, practical sailors, good navigators, famous lunarians [that is, competent to calculate longitude by the complex mathematical method of lunar distances], most excellent factors. If they could not obtain a cargo at one port they

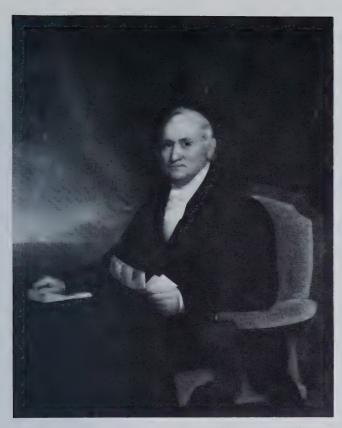
knew enough to find another, and the appearance of their ships, as they lay at anchor in Salem harbor, from those long voyages, impressed one that they had not forgotten what they went after, being very deep." The officers, too, "were excellent seamen, good navigators, generally good traders, ready to take command of the ship in case of sickness or death of the commander. They kept their ships in fine order, looking like a piece of new furniture after their long voyage." There was a soft-spot in the hearts of many, sailors and landsmen alike, for Mr. Peabody's ships, but the largest attachment was reserved for the ship *George*.

Forty-five *George* boys rose through the ranks to command vessels of their own before retirement from the sea, a further twenty ultimately became first officers, six attained second mates' berths, and numerous others were to serve in a variety of ships as supercargoes. George, herself, had but six captains, one of whom, Samuel Endicott of Beverly, commanded her during seven (not all consecutive) trips to India after having gone one voyage as second mate and two others as first. Three of her other captains were promoted after three to six voyages in her, each, as officers. Thomas Mason Saunders of Salem, George's fourth captain, who assumed command for the ninth voyage, had been a common seaman during the first. In all, this was an uncommon record. One other seaman, who served aboard in 1823-1824, deserves special mention: William Driver of Salem, the man who later not only returned the descendants of the Bounty mutineers from Tahiti (where they had been relocated by British authorities) to their home on Pitcairn Island but was also responsible for giving the name "Old Glory" to the American flag.

The War of 1812 hit Salem hard. Overseas trade came to a standstill; the vicissitudes of the times had depressed its economy as it had never been before: yet, despite the very real anxieties they generated, a spirit of enterprize still boiled beneath the surface. So it was, in 1814, that a number of unemployed Salem ship carpenters formed an association to pool their skills and construct a privateer for their own advantage and use. The site they selected was the deserted shipyard near Frye's Mills on a wide bend of the North River. Its former owner, Christopher Turner, had left it at the beginning of the war to work at the Boston Naval Shipyard and was now dead, but he had left behind him the model from which the association proposed to loft their vessel.

The hull was all but complete when, on February 13, 1815, a "flying post" from New York reached Salem with the news that a treaty of peace had been concluded with Great Britain the previous December. Eight days later, its ratification was confirmed. Suddenly, there was no such thing in Salem as an out-of-work ship carpenter. The vessels lying idle or decaying around the wharves began instantly to refit for sea.

The unfinished hull at Frye's Mills, although no longer useful for purposes of privateering, nevertheless seemed to Joseph Peabody well-suited for employment in the merchant service, provided she were coppered and another deck were raised upon her to increase the space below. During the month of March, the association com-



JOSEPH PEABODY (1757-1844), OWNER OF THE SHIP GEORGE
Oil Painting by Charles Osgood, 1849, after the original
by James Frothingham.

pleted the work to his specifications, and he purchased her for \$16 a ton. She was a bargain. The duties she was destined to pay alone would be one hundred and twenty-five times the original purchase price. The ship measured 328 tons, 101'10" in length, twenty-seven feet extreme breadth, and 13'6" depth in the hold.

By the twenty-second of May 1815, George (so-called for the owner's fifth son) had been launched, sparred, rigged, outfitted, manned, provisioned, and registered at Salem with Joseph Peabody and Gideon Tucker, owners. The day following, under the command of Captain William Haskell of Salem, she set sail on the first of her many voyages, bound first for Pernambuco

and then Calcutta.

Old "Po Adam," who spent thirteen years of his life in Peabody ships, was filled with enthusiasm for the completeness with which his employer outfitted them, "giving them a large supply of all things wanted for the voyage." The owner, he wrote, took "an interest in others who sailed his ships, giving them adventures; a chance to trade for themselves; no freight paid; shipping his officers and crews in his counting room, giving them two months' advance wages to each, if bound for the East Indies, putting on board the best of provisions and enough of them; no weighing out provisions, no allowances; 'eat and be filled' was his motto." The cooks and stewards "could boil salt beef and pork without burning them, make good curried fowls, and out of pieces of beef and pork made famous hash, which was served up generally three hundred and sixty-five times a year" with corncake as a supplement to breakfast.

Although George's hull lines had been calculated for speed by her builders of 1814, her swiftness lay more in overall performance than in consistent good sailing. In light airs, "she would fan along when others were at a standstill," but at thirteen knots she began to bury herself in the sea, "and sail had to be shortened, for nothing was being gained." Yet, thirteen knots is a very respectable rate of travel for a sailing vessel. The writer, who has had the opportunity to sail briefly aboard a bark-rigged vessel which once attained that very speed for the better part of a day while he was aboard, can testify to the tremendous aura of elemental power that vibrates through a square rigger under such conditions: the indescribable loom of the sails drawing full overhead; lines everywhere ashiver, all the while groaning and creaking under the strain; the physical exhaustion of keeping a footing upon a precipitous deck heeled over perhaps twenty degrees or more for hours on end; a billowing bow wave creaming aft to sweep past the lee rail in a foaming cascade of green water.

Although 250 miles made good in a day seems to have been *George*'s best going—by no means equal to the record of some crack clippers later in the century—her passage of forty-one days from the Cape of Good Hope to a North Atlantic port was never challenged. She once reached Sand Heads in the Hooghly River from Salem in eighty-nine days and twice made the homeward

passage in ninety-three.

George's principal cargoes from Calcutta consisted of twine, cotton goods, nutmeg, sugar, ginger, and, during seventeen voyages, 755,000 pounds of indigo. Of what the officers' and sailors' personal adventures consisted one can only guess: fancy prints and cotton goods, spices, conversation pieces for the sitting room, or exotic curiosities for the captains' museum back home.

In 1837, upon completion of the twenty-first voyage, Joseph Peabody made the decision to sell old *George*. Some of her former officers "got up a fishing party, and with other friends, one summer morning in June or July 1837, went down the harbor in the yacht *Caravan*, and caught a fine mess of cod and haddock. At noon, they boarded the *George* at her anchorage." There, other "Graduates" joined them from shore for a "glorious dinner," and with "brilliant fun kept the party in royal spirits all day."

When the ship, under new ownership, left the harbor for the last time, her alumni "watched her departure as that of an old friend, which she was, and one very dear to us all, because of the memories that clustered around her. It was a day of sorrow in Salem." Three and a half months later, *George* was condemned at Rio de Janiero.

Philip Chadwick Foster Smith is the Managing Editor of the Peabody Museum of Salem's quarterly journal of maritime history, The American Neptune, and has been the museum's Curator of Maritime History since 1966. Good & Hutchinson announce their Twenty-Fifth Year in business.



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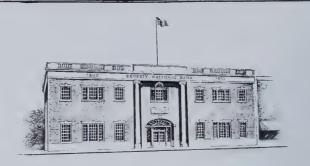
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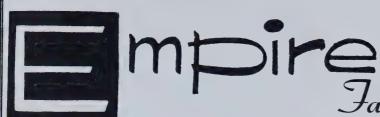
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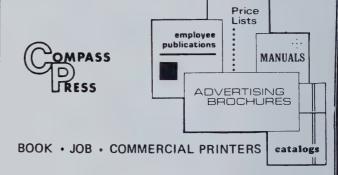
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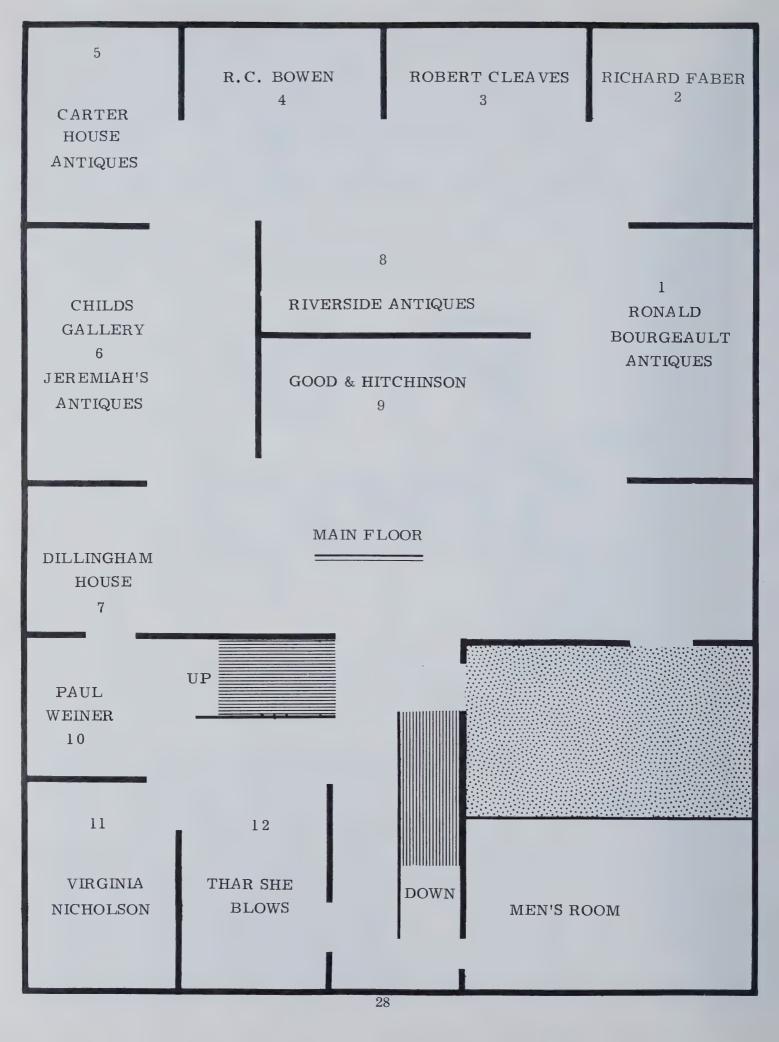


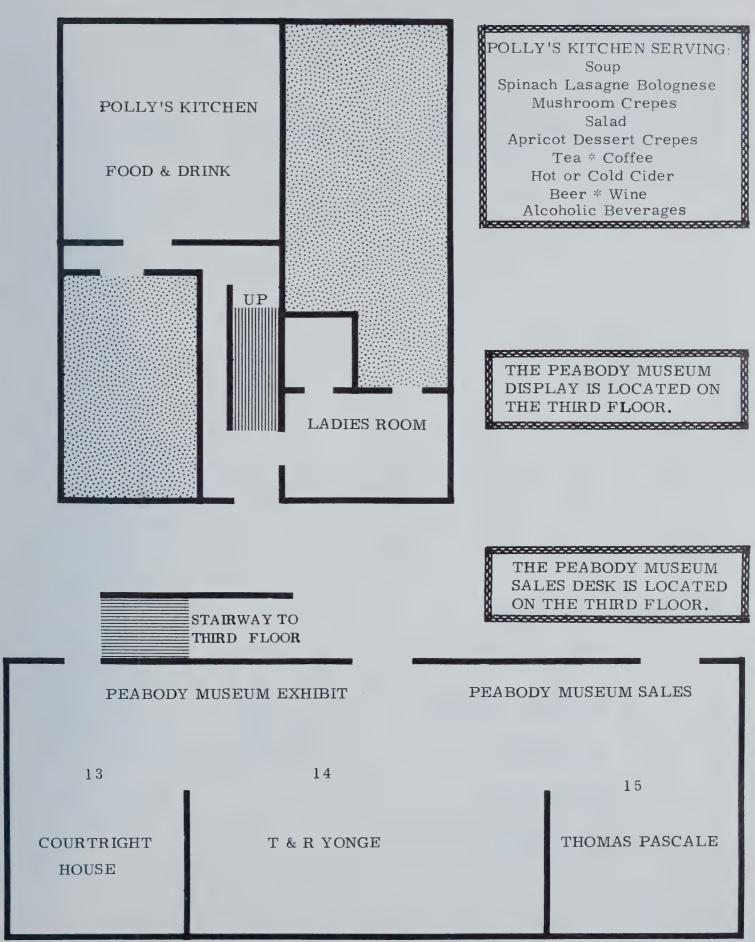
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## THE CLOCK COLLECTION

## at The Essex Institute By Anne Farnam, Curator

The clocks and watches in the collections of the Essex Institute provide vast and varied sources of study to the scholar and collector of clocks. Over two hundred clocks and timepieces and about one hundred watches represent the changes and developments of technology and form in time keeping from the fifteenth century through the twentieth century. While the majority of the collection is of European and especially American origin, there are also a number of oriental clocks.

This rich collection has accumulated over the many years of the Essex Institute's collecting, with one of the first clocks recorded as the bequest of George Rea Curwen in 1900. Mr. Curwen was an early antiquarian, and although the clock has no specific history, it was probably a Curwen family piece. It was first exhibited at the Essex Institute in 1875 when it formed part of a Centennial Exhibition put on by a group of Salem ladies to raise money for Salem's exhibit at the Philadelphia 1876 Exposition. The clock has a handsome tall case and is particularly unusual in that its works were made by Jacob Strausser, Nuremberg, Germany, 1737, and its case was probably made in the Massachusetts North Shore area about 1800. Either one of the early American owners of the clock works had a case built especially for them, or Mr. Curwen, in his enthusiasm for collecting American antiques, combined the two during the nineteenth century. A large carved, gilded eagle surmounts the clock, which was also added at some time during the nineteenth century (see Nutting, 3345 for illustration). The clock is currently displayed in the Peirce-Nichols House on Federal Street. A large part of the collection consists of the gifts of Mrs. Charles Mifflin Hammond who in 1917 presented the Institute with a collection of one hundred and eighty clocks, mostly of European origin, and including a number of what might be called "novelty items."

The collection has been well published and illustrated, beginning with Wallace Nutting's The Clock Book (1924) and Furniture Treasury (1933), in which there are numerous illustrations of the Institute's clocks, many of them part of the Hammond collection. Willis I. Milham's Time and Timekeepers (1923) and Brooks Palmer's The Book of American Clocks (1920; 1950) also incorporate the Essex Institute's clocks into their text and illustrations. Clocks and watches are on exhibition in the main gallery of the museum and in all six of our houses that are open to the public, and there are many others in offices in the library and museum and in museum storage; unfortunately most are not in running condition.

Examples of the four principal clock formstall, wall, shelf and tower—are all included in the collection. Of the approximately one hundred and forty Essex County watch and clockmakers and sellers of the eighteenth and nineteenth century listed by Palmer in his "list of makers" the Essex



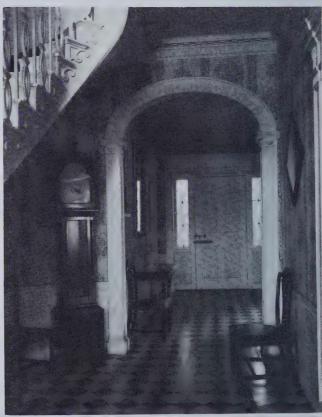
Institute has a fine representation. One of the best known early clocks is a wag-on-the-wall clock by Richard Manning of Ipswich, made in 1767 (Nutting 3530), and on permanent display in one of the museum period rooms. Manning also made the works for a tall clock whose brass and pewter dial, with silvered corner spandrels, is inscribed "Rich" Manning, 1763," acquired by the



SHELF CLOCK BY CURRIER & FOSTER, SALEM, 1831 - 1837.

Institute in 1967. While little is known of Manning's work, he was listed as a blacksmith and also made guns during the Revolutionary War; later in his life he was called a "gentleman," an evident testimony to his rising station in life. Charles Parsons identified two or three other similar clocks made by Manning aside from the Institute's in his article in the 1960 Bulletin of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors

Three rare tall clocks were also made by Essex County craftsmen, the earliest example being by Henry Harmson of Marblehead (fig. 1). Mr. Harmson, who engraved his name above the silvered dial made the clock for John Cogswell in the early 1730s. Its pine case was grained with red and black paint, and has a heavy upper section with bolection moldings typical of the early eighteenth century. Its extraordinary documentation was traced by Dean Fales in *Antiques* (July, 1963) at the time it was acquired. The only known tall clocks by the Salem jeweler and clockmaker Edmund Currier (1793-1853) has brass works and a cherry-mounted with original brass finials. It has a particularly handsome and colorful painted dial. It and a tall clock by David Wood of Newburyport about 1795-1805 are both displayed in the main gallery of the museum. Their cases are fine examples of North Shore cabinetmaking during the Federal period.

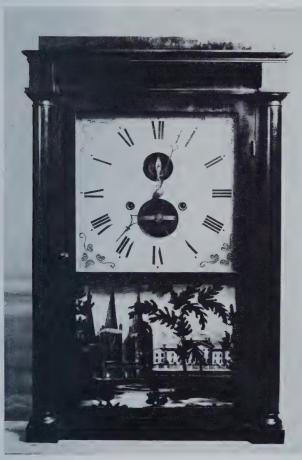


TALL CLOCK BY SIMON WILLARD, BOSTON, c. 1800, IN THE ENTRY HALL OF THE GARDNER-PINGREE HOUSE.

David Wood made the works for a shelf clock which also has a fine case. Edmund Currier later worked in partnership as Currier & Foster, from 1831 to 1837, and a shelf clock in the Empire style (fig. 2) is representative of their production. Elaborate decorative scenes of classical or patriotic derivation were reverse-painted on the glass fronts of shelf and wall clocks—particularly

banjo clocks—beginning in the last decade of the eighteenth century. The bright color and gold paints must have made showy additions to the interior decor of the era.

The Essex Institute's clock collection also includes excellent examples of other Massachusetts clock makers, particularly of the Roxbury group, Simon and Aaron Willard, and Elnathan Taber. A number of Willard banjo clocks are exhibited in the houses and a fine labeled Simon Willard tall clock graces the entry hall of the Gardner-Pingree House (fig. 3). It was made about 1800, and makes a rather startling contrast with a tall clock made by Aaron Willard in 1805, a watchman's clock whose appearance is as homely and utilitarian as the former's is decorative. A rare, if not unique clock, the watchman's clock (Nutting 3338) has an anchor escapement and a brass dial with no hands and twenty four hours marked by roman numerals and small pegs which recorded the watchman's rounds. Collected by the Hammonds in the early twentieth century, its original place of use is unknown, but would be fascinating to discover.



SHELF CLOCK BY SILAS BURNHAM TERRY, PLYMOUTH, CONNECTICUT, c. 1848.

As every clock collector knows, Connecticut was a prominent center of manufacture in the eighteenth and especially in the nineteenth century when the mass manufacturing of patent models began in Bristol, Terryville, Waterbury, New Haven and elsewhere. There are many examples in the Institute's collections of the work of Eli Terry, Seth Thomas, Silas Hoadley, as well as the New Haven Clock Company and other late manufacturers. Of particular interest among

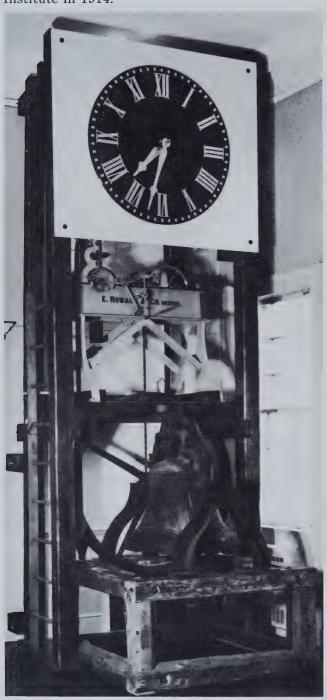
many shelf clocks is one by Silas Burnham Terry (1807-1876) of Plymouth, Connecticut, made about 1848 (fig. 4). It has an over-pasted label of J. J. & W. Beals of Boston, interesting in and of itself for an indication of the methods of sales and distribution in the nineteenth century. The clock, somewhat ordinary in its exterior apearance, is a rarity in that it has a hair-spring lever or balance escapement. Silas Burnham Terry was a creative inventor, according to Palmer, and unusual spring movements were his specialty. He obtained a patent November 3, 1830 for a "Combined Spiral Spring for Clocks." Terry worked by himself and for other people and companies throughout the nineteenth century and no doubt his mechanical genius greatly furthered Connecticut clock-making technology. Another Connecticut maker whose mechanical ingenuity is represented in the collection is Silas Hoadley (1786-1870) of Plymouth. At various times he worked in partnership with Seth Thomas and Eli Terry. A carpenter rather than a metal worker, Hoadley's clocks mostly had wooden works, such as the tall clock with a cherry case at the Essex Institute that has Masonic emblems painted on its dial. It has a twenty-four hour wooden movement, and has recently been in the special exhibition "Masonic Symbols in American Decorative Arts" at the Museum of Our National Heritage in Lexington.

Many other names well known to clock collectors are represented in the Essex Institute collections, but space prohibits their description here in great detail. Eventually the Institute hopes to publish them as part of their new Museum Booklet Series. In concluding, however, a brief word must be devoted to the European clocks and some of the interesting or hard-to-research "oddities"



MODERN COPPER PLATE ENGRAVING OF A CLOCK DIAL FROM THE ORIGINAL PLATE BY THOMAS JOHNSTON FOR PRESERVED CLAPP OF AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

of the collection. One particularly interesting and often-published rarity that is also of interest to print collectors and scholars is the copperplate of a clock face engraved by the Bostonian Thomas Johnston (1708-1767) for Preserved Clapp of Amherst (fig. 5). Clapp evidently contemplated making a number of clocks if he had paper dials made, which would have been cheaper than single brass or painted metal ones. The engraved plate, which is on the reverse side of music pages, is signed by Johnston, but undated. It is an exceedingly fine example of the eighteenth century engraver's art, with its death's head cherubs and fantastic fish, combined with more traditional rococo foliate ornament. It was given to the Institute in 1914.



TOWER CLOCK FROM THE BENTLEY SCHOOL, BY E. HOWARD & CO., 1863. INSTALLED WITH THE PAUL REVERE BELL IN THE FRONT HALL OF THE ESSEX INSTITUTE.

Mr. and Mrs. Hammond seem to have devoted much of their efforts to collecting early European clocks, such as an early German wall clock purported to have been found in the sixteenth-century ruins of a church abandoned at the time of the Black Death in 1347-8, or a Swiss (German?) clock that is placed within a painting of a romantic landscape (Nutting, 3539). A watch was placed in the painted clock tower and water mechanically runs through the picture. There is also a music box incorporated into the picture's mechanics. In addition to such novelties, Mr. Hammond also used to create clocks out of various pieces of works he purchased, or he made new cases or repaired old ones for his collections. A number of the clocks are so noted with labels in his handwriting.

One of the most interesting, and perhaps outstanding, European clocks was once in the Medici Palace in the Via Servi, Florence (Nutting, 3549) and bears the Medici coat of arms. Its maker is unknown but it was purchased by the Misses Marion and Elizabeth Allen in 1880 when they were on a grand tour of the Continent. The Misses Allen spent the year travelling in Europe, collecting paintings, prints, tapestries, and tourist "relics" of European sites, most of which came to the Essex Institute in 1913 after their deaths. They lived at 31 Chestnut Street, and early photographs demonstrate the transformation of their handsome Federal period mansion by their eclectic collecting tastes at the end of the nine-

teenth century. The largest clock in the Institute and now the most prominently displayed is the tower clock installed at the Bentley School in 1863, made by E. Howard & Company of Boston. In working condition, its large works are easily visible and fascinate everyone who comes in the main door of the Institute. It is especially attention-getting when it rings at twelve o'clock, a muted clapper sounding against the Paul Revere bell which was originally hung in William Bentley's church in 1801 and was later moved to the Bentley School when it was built. On May 29, 1801, Bentley noted in his diary "At the furnace I engaged a bell, whose wt. was 892 lb. without a stock or tongue, for our Society. Mr. Revere has a furnace at North end." (fig. 6).

The clock and watch collection at the Essex Institute is as varied in form as it is in size and fascinates all who come to our museum and historic houses. Its variety and depth reflect the development of clock-making technology in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as well as the acquisitive habits of Essex County and Boston collectors and the interest of the Essex Institute in acquiring well-documented objects for its collection.

Anne Farnam is curator of the Essex Institute. She was formerly at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in the department of American Decorative Arts. Currently she is a candidate for a Ph.D. in American studies at Boston University.

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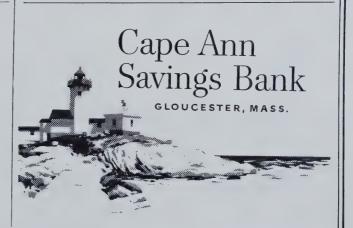
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D. Roger Howlett graduated from Hamilton College as a major in History of Art and went on to graduate work at Cooperstown. He was on the curatorial staff of the Garvin collection at the Yale University Art Gallery and is currently a partner in Childs Gallery.

## IN PRAISE



by D. ROGER HOWLETT

Historic Archaelogy in the New England area is not new, but only recently has the importance of the documentation from historic sites been realized. We think that we know what the shipping families of Salem used as tableware in the Federal period. We know from invoices and inventories what they bought and what they died with, we know how much was owned and what it was valued at, but, even when tea services and glasses fitting these descriptions pass down in Salem families can we be certain that this is what is meant by the documents? Are these representative of what was in use, or are these things representative of the very finest and the rest has since been thrown out? Or, heaven forefend, were the heirlooms on Salem mantlepieces purchased at Shreve's a generation ago?

The recent excavation at the Narbonne House at the Salem Maritime National Historic Site¹ goes a long way to confirming what was long thought to have passed through the kitchens and over the tea trays of Salem Houses. The dig there produced, "unusually large numbers of fine English pieces. ...late eighteenth-century English ceramics, ... Creamwares... predominated; sets of creamware, shell-edged pearlware, pearlware bowls, as well as Chinese porcelain teacups and saucers." The period of the ceramics in the Narbonne dig was from the second quarter of the eighteenth to the first quarter of the 19th centuries.

At the same time the Narbonne dig was going on (1973-75) another more restricted discovery was made on Chestnut Street only a few steps from the doors of Hamilton Hall. In the Fall of

1974, while repairing the foundation of a barn at 171/2 Chestnut Street, Racket Shreve discovered a stone walled pit about five feet by five feet square laid up as dry masonry, two sides of which form the southwest corner of the foundation of the barn. It was clear that this had been used as a trash dump and several pieces of high-quality ceramics were immediately found near the surface. During the next two summers Racket Shreve diligently excavated the pit finishing in the Fall of 1976. When he reached the clay bottom it was in all about five feet deep. The amount of water that ran through the pit, not only in rainy periods, suggested that it may have been excavated as a spring-fed dairy. There is also a stonelined trough that leads away from the pit to the east that would have served as a drain.

The site of the excavation was divided from the ancient Pickering holdings in the Federal period and Captain Stephen Phillips put up a house (the greater part of which is incorporated into the rear of 17½ Chestnut Street) about 1804. The trash pit is within 50 feet of the kitchen door to that house and about 300 feet from the seventeenth century Pickering House. The overwhelmingly Federal-period contents of the trash suggest not only a new Federal house, but even a newly formed fortune. These are not the table articles of a poor family or even one of moderate income, and until better evidence is available we should posit the Phillips family as the source of the trash, despite the seeming lack of relationship of the two initial enclosures to

family initials.

The excavation produced several thousand small pieces of ceramic, numerous pieces of both

bottle and table glass as well as animal and fish bones, shoe leather, bone handles for hairbrush tops, deer antlers, coconut shells, brass buttons and buckles, flint and thousands of cherry pits.

1. Archaelogy Today, August 1976.

An analysis of the porcelain fragments shows that the earliest piece may be a third-quarter of the eighteenth century Chinese porcelain 10 inch plate with underglaze blue decoration in the manner of a Dutch Delft plate. The latest, probably, the English transfer teapot in fig. 6 dates from 1810-25. The vast majority of the fragments of both porcelain and glass can be dated from 1790 to 1820 or to the heyday of the Salem trade of the Federal period.

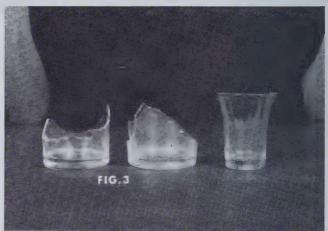
#### TABLE GLASS

Perhaps the most intriguing find, because of its fine quality and large amount is the Silesian glass (figs. 1 & 2) that was found in the excavation in fairly large quantities. The glass to the left in fig. 1 is the most perfect of at least seven identical chip-cut stemmed wines with swagged and tassled borders. They are clearly of a piece with the punch cup to the right and the two right-hand tumblers in fig. 2. Fig. 2 shows from left to right, a straight-sided tumbler which may or may not have had decoration and probably looked much like the left tumbler in fig. 2A, a barrel-sided tumbler (part of the Silesian set) virtually identical to the right tumbler in fig. 2A, and a straight-sided tumbler (part of the Silesian set). The Silesian set would seem to be fairly large in size, including at least four forms with at least eight to twelve glasses of each form. It would seem to date from 1785-1800, be of fine quality and was probably quite expensive at the time of purchase. Fig. 3 shows three less expensive glasses of about the same period, blown but uncut and undecorated; the two to the left are straight sided tumblers, the one to the right a shot or cordial glass with blown paneled sides.









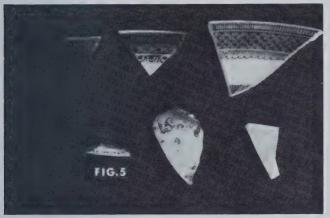
#### CHINESE EXPORT PORCELAIN

The quantities of blue and white Chinese export porcelain found in the excavation are not surprising. The shipping documents show tremendous quantities of blue and white of various qualities coming into Salem Harbor from the late 1780's through the beginning of the War of 1812. Canton, Nanking and Fitzhugh are all represented (fig. 4) along with scale and butterfly bordered pieces with landscape vignettes. The variation in quality and color of the Canton seems to dispel the notion that it can be dated on the basis of quality, since all in this excavation would seem, in context, to date before 1825. Perhaps later Canton was universally of lower quality, but earlier pieces certainly were not universally of the highest.

While the vast majority of export porcelain was underglaze blue and white, a few notable ex-



amples of other things were found (fig. 5). Fragments of a drum teapot with overglaze blue dotted borders and a heart-shaped initial enclosure in gold and orange with the initials "SAL", a piece of a handleless cup with grisaille, gold and orange decoration, but probably not belonging with the teapot, a fragment to a shaped piece in multicolors of orange, purple, puce, gold and brown, and two very puzzling pieces to a porcelain platter (not illustrated) decorated with bamboo stalks with a few clumps of landscape in multicolor with much use of overglaze gold. While the body is oriental it could be Japanese as well as Chinese.



#### ENGLISH BLUE AND WHITE

At least as popular as the Chinese wares were the English blue and white decorated pearlwares, both transfer and hand painted. Fig. 6 illustrates a group varying in date from the hand-painted pieces in the lower left (1780-95), to the transfer saucers and fluted mug in the upper right (1790-1805), to the teapot (1810-25).

It is interesting to note that so much of the English blue and white is in exact copy of Chinese export designs and that the popularity of both color and pattern seems to have stayed in both changing date and place of origin. The fluted

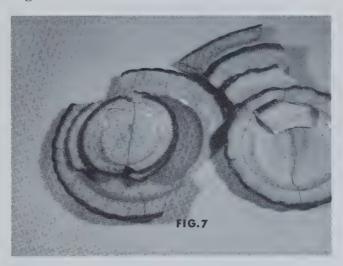
mug is rare and especially fine.



#### COMB-EDGE LEEDS-TYPE PEARLWARE

Somewhat more pedestrian but no less popular than the more elaborate blue & white in terms of numbers of pieces were the Leeds-type pearlware plates (fig. 7) with molded edges decorated under the glaze with blue. Plates vary from 10 inches down to about 5 and have six to ten border

types. In addition to plates, there were platters, deep dishes and one 13 inch long tureen. It would appear from the various slight differences on the molding of the borders that the plates were seen as interchangeable as table service, despite coming from different sets or manufacturers.



### BANDED AND MOCHA-DECORATED PEARLWARE

Perhaps the most interesting of the pearlwares are those with the mocha decorations of dendrites formed by skillful application of tobacco juice, stale urine and turpentine before the glaze. A matched pair of bowls (fig. 8) and a pitcher dating from 1790-1815 illustrate in fairly intact form that this attractive ceramic was in use in Chestnut Street houses.



### LIGHT CREAMWARE OR UNDECORATED PEARLWARE

In fig. 9 we see three examples, of many found, of a late creamware which has been glazed with a light blue-green pearlware glaze to achieve greater whiteness. The forms are almost identical to those of the previous mocha-decorated pearlware. Almost certainly the only thing that separates these two wares is cost. They were in all likelihood made at the same time, in the same English factories and sold through the same merchants to the same clientele. A more elaborate, though perhaps less elegant, use of pearlware is the chamberpot seen in fig. 10. Coming out of the same English potteries that produced the other pearlware, they show the lack of political loyalty of the potters and the questionable taste of the recently victorious American clientele with the

heraldic enblazonment of the front with a crowned "GR". The pot is modeled with incised bandings that have been glazed to a light blue-gray and has an incised and molded applied oval decorated with blue glaze for the crowned King George. The freely-drawn deep blue decorative chain around the pot provides a light touch in keeping with the message. Fig. 11 shows a more staid personalized container, in the form of a pitcher of pearlware with a green banding at the top and a brown initial "C", initial enclosure and bottom band. The significance of the "C" as well as the significance of the "SAL" on the export teapot remains a mystery, since this would seem to be a Phillips trash pit.







#### **STONEWARE**

One of the most intact pieces in the dump is a stoneware crock (fig. 12) with handles with incised and blue decoration and a salt glaze. It seems most likely to be of North German origin. The stoneware jug and handled bottle (fig. 13) seem to be of British origin, while the nicely decorated redware pot may be local. Another handled bottle was found nearly intact and pieces

to a few other stoneware fragments, but redware predominated in these rougher ceramic forms. Unlike the redware pot in fig. 13, most of the other pieces were glazed on the inside only and were of distinctly lower quality potting with simple flared sides and thick lips. These workaday wares were almost certainly of Salem or Essex County manufacture.

The bottles in fig. 14 are the most intact representatives of a plethora of spirit containers. A reflection on this, the number of fine Silesian drinking glasses and the small pitchers that may have served as punch pots show both the seriousness of intent and elegance of approach, of the Salem tipplers of the Federal period. Perhaps this may have had a small hand in bringing some of the fine tablewares to the trash pit to allow us to divine the contents of a Federal tea and drinking table on Chestnut Street.







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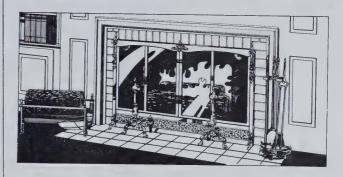
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BALL-LEGGED TABLE AND MARY (PICKERING) LEAVITT AND DAUGHTER SARAH

# GENERATIONS OF PICKERING FURNITURE

by ROBERT BOOTH

When the first John Pickering framed his little two-room house in 1651, he could not have known that eight rooms, nine generations, and 325 years later, John Pickering would still be living there. Nor could he have imagined that—after all those years and all those generations, after all the vagaries of taste and style, after all else he'd known had long since vanished—somehow, his squat, square, ball-legged table, the one he'd brought from England in 1636, would still be standing there, the patriarch of a houseful of Pickering antiques.

Not that the word antiques correctly describes them; more accurately, the Pickering pieces are Darwinian survivors, items that have proved their worth down through the centuries, finally to achieve, like the house itself, a kind of functional immortality. Of course, all this is due to the Pickering family, to their tradition of continuity, and respect for the thing well-made, to their willingness to preserve and renew that which others might destroy.

That this attitude was once common in New England is illustrated by the following reminiscence of Col. Timothy Pickering, written at the age of 83, in 1828:

I remember hearing (in 1751) my father say, that, supposing the sills of the house must be decayed, he had provided new white oak timber to replace them; but that the carpenter, when he ripped off the weather boards, found the sills sound of swamp white oak; and the carpenter told him that they would last longer than any new sills that he could provide; and the same sills remain to this day."

And to this day, as well; although that race of carpenters died out long ago.

The family's respect for integrity and sense of tradition finds its characteristic expression in the most Pickering of all Pickering pieces—those built by a member of the fourth generation, Rev. Theophilus Pickering (1700-47). The first college graduate in the family (Harvard, 1719), Theophilus was noted for his "mechanickal genius" as



JOHN PICKERING VI, BILBOA MIRROR, IN MANSION ROOM

well as his intellectual gifts; the bachelor minister of Chebacco parish (now Essex, Mass.), he pursued an interest in cabinet-making that resulted in the invention of a unique dove-tail joint, and the construction of several fine pieces of furniture, including a magnificent highboy, a sermon desk, shaving mirror and bellows for himself, and a matching set of eleven black leather "Boston chairs"—one each for his brother Timothy, Timothy's wife Mary, and the nine Pickering children back home in Salem.

All of these pieces still exist, and all but the highboy are to be found at the Pickering House, where, to this day, the eleven chairs of Theophilus comprise the dining room set. "By his works ye shall know him"—and so Theophilus Pickering

lives on at 18 Broad Street.



MANSION ROOM

And then there is "Colonel Tim's favorite chair"—an imposing black caned chair, as rigid and upright as the Colonel himself. Timothy Pickering—George Washington's Secretary of State, and of War, as well as Postmaster General—spent most of his time in Philadelphia, but whenever in Salem to visit brother John, he always favored this chair, and so its name. It is situated in the oldest part of the house, next to

an album of Col. Tim's degrees and commissions. Another interesting piece is "Col. Tim's desk:" it doubled as a sideboard so well that for more than a century its contents remained uninspected. A recent grand opening proved the desk to be a veritable treasure chest, yielding Pickering family documents ranging from 17th century deeds and depositions to manuscript interviews of Gilbert Stuart, not to mention a room-by-room inventory of the house taken in 1694.

Only the ball-legged table and one or two others have survived since 1694, and, while this loss is much to be regretted, it is important to remember that the Pickering House is not a period house; that, although it was built in the 17th century, it is also an 18th, 19th, and 20th century residence, the product of ten generations of adaptation, expansion, and alteration; and that it is only fitting that each generation be represented by some piece, be it Deacon Timothy's handsome block-front desk, or his son John's little handmade applewood stand; the third John Pickering's William & Mary highboy, the sixth John Pickering's Bilboa mirror, or the ninth John Pickering's easy chair.

While this may sound like eclecticism bordering on chaos, it really has nothing to do with the eclectic: these pieces are here not by conscious design, but because they belong here, have always been here, and always seemed right. Their fellows, the other pieces that filled these rooms in their day, are largely gone: given away as dowry, moved to another house, chopped up for kindling, whatever—all the rest are gone, and these remain. Not because they were the finest pieces, or the oldest, or most expensive, but because each one had something—some quality beyond mere utility, beyond durability or design—that endeared it to this family, generation after generation.

There are times when, on opening the door into the oldest room, I am conscious of having interrupted something—perhaps a conversation among these pieces of furniture. On such occasions, I am quick to leave the room to my elders and their discourse, whatever it may be. I suspect that the sword chair does a lot of the talking, and Colonel Tim's Favorite; the ball-legged table and the William & Mary highboy—the two old Englishmen—listen much and say little, while the Theophilus sermon desk dispenses moral philosophy to the rather excitable fire bucket. It goes without saying that the Leavitt family, whose portraits grace the walls, take a keen interest in these wooden colloquies—a very keen interest, judging from the pained expressions directed toward the uninvited guest.

Of course, the Leavitts really look forward to the evenings—more specifically, the wee hours of the night—for then, while the present Pickerings take their rest, the shades of Pickerings past take ghostly form, and gather here in moonlit reunion. There they are—farmers, soldiers, carpenters and lawyers, scholars, sailors, and ministers, all clad in the garb of their time and occupation, all bearing a strong resemblance to one another. We cannot hear what they say—although some speak in an accent more English than not—but each one clearly feels at home. There stands the progenitor, a youthful farmer, by his table; and there, his grandson John sits in the sword chair, balancing

accounts, while Theophilus, at his sermon desk, splits sacred hairs with brother Tim, whose son, the aged Colonel, dozes in his chair, surrounded by eight sons. At last dawn breaks over Pickering's Hill, the meeting is adjourned across the street once more, and the rooms of their house fill with light.

And so their furniture remains, invested with their spirit, imparting a certain character, almost an aura. Through the furniture, through what remains, each room is eloquent of what once was; each piece tells a story, each room makes a chapter, in the book of Salem's Pickerings.

The parlor, with its portraits, its raised ceiling and French Empire style: this is the formal room, courtly and elevated, eminently the room of the sixth John Pickering, scholar and lawyer, who was married here, and made it his "mansion room". The dining room belongs to Theophilus and Colonel Tim, for here, ranged round the table, are the minister's chairs, and there is Col. Tim's desk, and his portrait, and the silver wine cooler presented to him by Washington.

Upstairs, in this male house: a woman's room, the walls decked with samplers; here, a dower highboy dominates, a piece some bride brought to her husband's house, only to find the highboy too high, the ceilings too low. What to do? A section was lopped from the trunk, the top fitted back on, and the highboy moved in—and moved in as well, a brand-new little dresser, the three drawers of which had belonged to the highboy. Thus parent and child. And then the parlor chamber: there, Col. Tim's trunk, its lid carved "Q.M.G."—Quarter Master General, his rank in the Revolutionary Army. He lived out of this trunk from Valley Forge to Yorktown. And over there, a canopy bed, just barely squeezed in; a cradle by the fire; a Pickering crib.

An article such as this can too easily come to resemble the inventory of 1694: a room-by-room catalogue of the possessions of the dead. Which is precisely what the Pickering pieces are not: it is a curious paradox that these objects are more spiritual than material, for in truth it is the Pickering family, its history and traditions down through ten generations, that gives them their greatest value. As long as there are Pickerings here, these pieces will live—and through them, the Pickerings past.



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Robert S. Booth graduated from Harvard College as an English major. He is the curator of the Pickering House as well as chief researcher for Historic Salem Inc.



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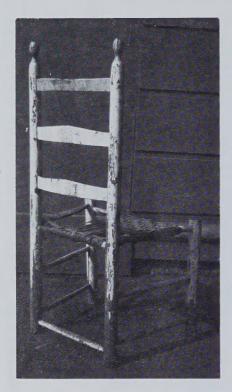
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The Flower Shop John Flynn and Sons Inc.	$\begin{array}{c} 37 \\ 14 \end{array}$	Sawtell Office Supply	53
Framemakers Inc.	12	Scott Oil The Seventy Six Restaurant and Lounge	52 37
Fruit of the Four Seasons	53	Ship Ahoy Restaurant	23
The Garden Spot Gardner Mattress	53 38	Small Wonders	27 37
Gannett, Welsh, Ives, Kotler Inc.	46	Spirit of '76 Bookstore Steve's Quality Market	23
Gee Jay Inc.	$\begin{array}{c} 51 \\ 20 \end{array}$	La Strega	26
Good and Hutchinson Associates Goult-Pickman House	$\frac{20}{25}$	Sumner Paint	53
The Gourmet Shop	50	The Talbots 350 Food Mart	50 51
Hamilton Gardens	53	Benjamin C. Tower	51
The Harbour Side Restaurant Kate Hardiman	$\begin{array}{c} 54 \\ 26 \end{array}$	The Town Shop	52
Hayden's Safe and Lock	24	Village Restaurant Vincent Potato Chip Co. Inc.	53 53
Heritage Cooperative Bank Hi-Da-Way	39 14		
Hi-Da-Way Plant Branch	26	E. G. Washburne and Co. Waters and Brown	45 38
Holyoke Mutual Insurance Co. in Salem Homan Apothecary	54 53	Weiner's Antique Shop	13
Hooper's Grocery	53	Woodman's Function Hall	45
		Young Engineering Co.	46

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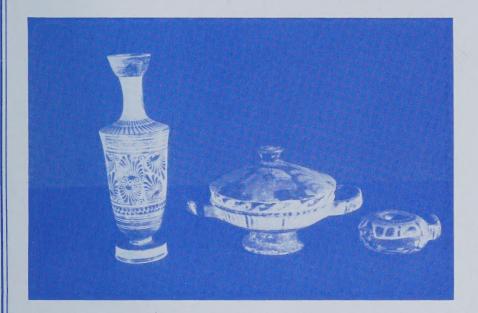
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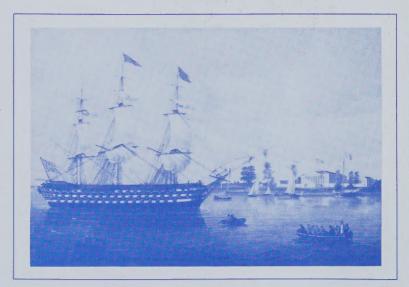
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A small selection from a good, small group of Greek antiquities mostly Attic period, 5th century B. C.

The USS PENNSYLVANIA off the Naval Hospital, Norfolk, Va.

Oil on canvas , 19 x 27 inches, circa 1845.



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